

Code of Expectations Between HECSA Small Business Programs Office And Small Businesses

Small Businesses can expect that the Small Business Programs Office will:

Make very clear the depth and breadth of the services that can be expected from the Small Business Programs Office;

- Be exceptionally candid as to whether the capabilities of the small business match the Humphries Engineer Center Support Activities (HECSA) needs, and, if not, direct them to the appropriate small business office or prime contractor Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO);
- Explain the relevant laws enacted for their benefit, i.e., small business set-asides, 8(a) set-asides, HUBZone set-asides, service-disabled veteran owned small business set-asides, subcontracting goals, and illustrate how the small business can use them to maximize contract and subcontract opportunities;
- Put them in contact with the appropriate contracting personnel, project/technical managers, end users, or any other relevant personnel;
- Inform small businesses with up-to-date information in light of the ever changing procurement legislation and implementing regulations that impact small business;
- Make very clear that certification as an 8(a) program participant, small disadvantaged business, HUBZone contractor, or service-disabled veteran does not create an *entitlement* to a contract nor a guarantee for one in the future;
- Stress that understanding the HECSA's requirements and procurement process, engaging in strong marketing, and competing for work, even sole source work, is critical to enhancing one's prospects of obtaining a contract;
- Ensure a professionally conducted meeting with time parameters and expectations set in advance;
- Summarize the agency's contracting opportunities at its various contracting activities and field installations or make referrals to those places where the small business can go to obtain such knowledge;
- Impart knowledge about the "market" (what the HECSA buys) and the competitive environment at the HECSA (what service needs are growing, which are declining, where the future strategic, long term opportunities are, etc.);
- Provide information on the HECSA's latest acquisition-related initiatives and unique programs that will, or were designed to, increase the chances of a small business to obtain a contract or subcontract;
- Offer follow-up due date for responding to questions for which the Small Business Programs Office staff does not have an immediate answer;
- Not give vague or generic information, such as stating how many millions or billions of dollars the HECSA spends on goods and services with no explanation as to how the small business can reasonably expect to fit into the HECSA's procurement structure or system;
- Treat all small businesses the same under like circumstances when providing pertinent information and not show special preference to a network of friends or acquaintances.

The Small Business Programs Office can expect that the small business will:

- Have done preliminary research on the HECSA's websites and other sources of information to determine what our mission is and whether we buy what the small business sells;
- Be focused in developing discussion in its area of expertise based on requirements;
- Be cognizant of time and schedule and not prolong the discussion past the time set for the meeting;
- Make a case as to why the HECSA should use its firm over other businesses that perform the same type of work or provide the same products;
- Not develop unrealistic expectations based upon the meeting;
- Be aware that the Small Business Programs Office is not the end user and does not need to hear the entire *technical* marketing presentation or cost proposal;
- Follow the recommended avenues of opportunity outlined by the Small Business Programs Office that the firm determines are consistent with its best interests;
- Understand that various small business certifications, i.e., 8(a), SDB, HUBZone, women owned small businesses, service disabled veterans, **are secondary** to a small business' ability to emphasize its high quality products or services, on time delivery, and best value;
- Understand that from an ethical and legal standpoint that the Small Business Programs Office **CANNOT**:
 - Promise anyone a contract;
 - Provide government-proprietary or procurement-sensitive information;
 - Share third party proprietary information provided by other small businesses;
 - Help small businesses write/review proposals to be submitted to the HECSA or any other government agency;
 - Act in a manner that gives the appearance of acting as an agent of any business;
 - Aid or abet any business in preparation of a protest against the HECSA or any other Government agency;
 - Lobby source selection officials to select a specific small business;
 - Advocate purchase of goods and services that the government does not need or want;
 - Help to create false expectations on the part of small businesses of nonexistent contracting opportunities;
 - Supersede the authority of the contracting officer;
 - Show improper favoritism to some small businesses at the expense of others;

Encourage or accept gratuities.